

# Varsity Match Report

by Philip Best

After a successful year in the SCCU, and victories in the Dragons and Freshers' Matches, hopes were high that this might be CUCC's year. Not that the Oxford top boards were any weaker than recent years (they fielded an IM on board one), but the lower boards looked in our favour.

Preparation for the match proved difficult as Oxford decided to break with convention and declare their team in alphabetical order, whilst guesses at the board order were hampered by the presence of unknown names like 'Sergey Malichenki' and 'Vladishev Flek' in the side. Any preparation that was done was wasted anyhow, because we arrived at the RAC Club on the morning of Saturday 5th March, to find that the two Oxford players mentioned above had not even made it to the venue, and that they would be substituted by their President and Reserve (of roughly equal rating to the missing players). A rather extravagant way of avoiding being theory-hacked I feel.

After a keenly contested sandwich-eating competition, the real business of the day got underway with the toss. This went in Oxford's favour, and they chose White on odd, much to the dismay of seven of the Cambridge players who now ended up with the wrong colour. "And I thought our President was a prize tosser" was Eddie's response to this turn of events.

Play got underway, and it was again Eddie who hit the headlines first, with a stunning TN in the French Defence. The first twelve moves of the game went as follows:

□ **Tim Dickinson**

■ **Ed Holland**

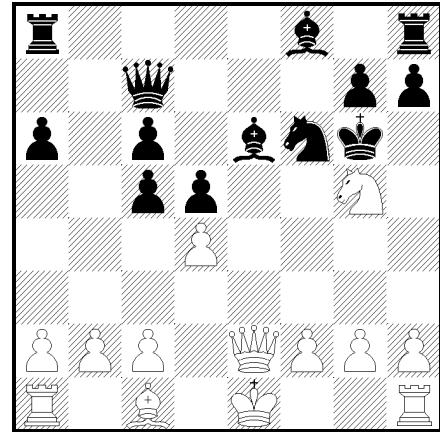
*Varsity Match, Board Five*

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5 4 e×d5 e×d5  
5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 ♙b5 a6 7 ♙×c6 b×c6 8 ♘e5  
♙c7 9 ♙e2 ♙e6 10 ♘df3 ♘f6 11 ♘×f7  
♙×f7 12 ♘g5+ ♙g6

(see diagram at the top of next column)

At which point Ed declared "I think it's the safest place for it."

On the other boards, Andy Mendelson gained an early initiative on board six, whilst Andy Jones looked to have the worse of his position on board two. The rest looked fairly level or slightly down except for board seven.



Here Ben won a pawn early on with the following opening:

□ **Alex Lewis**

■ **Ben Hague**

*Varsity Match, Board Seven*

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♙g5 ♙b4  
5 e5 h6 6 ♙d2 ♙×c3 7 b×c3 ♘e4 8 ♙d3  
♘×d2 9 ♙×d2 c5 10 f4

More common is 10 dxc5

10... ♘c6 11 ♘f3 ♙a5 12 ♙e2 b6 13 c4  
d×c4 14 ♙×a5 ♘×a5 15 d×c5 b×c5

Extra pawn, albeit doubled and isolated! The game continued:

16 ♙b1 ♙a6 17 ♙f2 ♙e7 18 ♙e3 ♙hd8  
19 c3 ♙ab8 20 ♘d2 f5 21 ♙hd1 ♙b6  
22 h3 ♙db8 23 g3 ♙b5 24 ♙e1 ♙a6  
25 ♙ed1

At this point, Ben approached the President and enquired of him whether the team position permitted taking a draw. The President pointed out that only Andy Mendelson was looking to be in control with both Andy Jones and Eddie in trouble, so if he had any chance of winning he had to give it his best shot. Ben returned to the board and offered a draw five minutes later. His claim that there were no winning plans was refuted by an analysis of lines following 25... Rb2.

Anyway, we were off the mark.

The next game to finish was, surprisingly, Eddie's. Given the position after twelve moves, it was not surprising that this game finished quickly. What was surprising was that Ed won it. After consolidating his position, he carried out a tactical coup to remove one of his opponent's rooks from the

board. Perhaps the King of Sweden was right, and a good army should be led from the front.

This victory seemed to spur the team on, as within five minutes Andy Mendelson cleaned up, winning Cambridge Best Game Prize in the process (See game below this article — notes by Andy M.). Jon Hastings who had slowly turned a slightly worse position into a slightly better one, tightened the screw and took his game into a trivially won ending. On the ladies board, Emilia played well, and despite all Heidi's efforts her position remained solid. If anything, as they agreed the draw she had slightly the better of the chances.

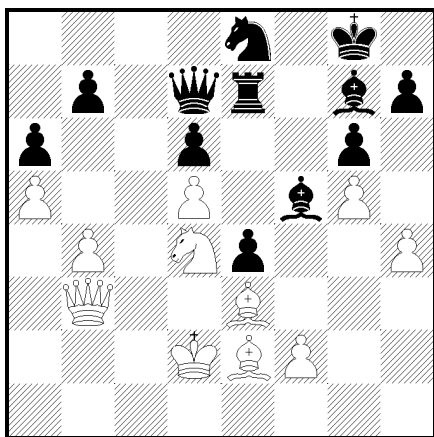
And so Cambridge opened up a 4-1 lead, and just half-a-point more was needed for victory. It wasn't all good news though. As the time control approached, Andy Hon found his position slowly slipping away as Dharshan pushed forwards. Indeed, Dharshan won the Oxford Best Game prize for this effort.

#### □ Dharshan Kumaran (IM)

##### ■ Andrew Hon

*Varsity Match, Board One*

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6  
5 ♙e2 O-O 6 ♙e3 e5 7 d5 c6 8 g4 c×d5  
9 c×d5 ♘bd7 10 g5 ♘e8 11 ♘f3 f5 12 b4  
13 h4 ♘b6 14 ♙b3 f×e4 15 ♘d2  
16 a4 ♘c8 17 ♘d×e4 ♘e7 18 ♘g3  
19 ♘f5 20 ♙×f5 ♙×f5 21 ♙c1 e4 22 ♘b5  
23 ♙d4 ♙c8 24 ♙d2 ♙×c1 25 ♙×c1  
26 ♙e6 ♙×e6 27 d×e6 ♙×e6 28 ♙g4! d5  
29 ♙×e6 ♙×e6 30 ♙c5 ♙h8 31 ♙×d5  
32 ♙d4 1-0



26 ♙e6 ♙×e6 27 d×e6 ♙×e6 28 ♙g4! d5  
29 ♙×e6 ♙×e6 30 ♙c5 ♙h8 31 ♙×d5  
32 ♙d4 1-0

On board three Nick (presumably realising that Andy had now set a new 'Tosser Standard' by achieving a Varsity score of 0/3, and that he also could attain that standard with a little effort) also dropped a pawn and

position during time trouble. So, Cambridge hopes depended upon Andy Jones on board two. Here, the state of play was that Jim Cavendish had managed to pick up material out of the opening, but in doing so had used all but two minutes on his clock, with twenty moves to go to the time control. Andy proceeded to complicate the position, and then set up a nice cheapo strategy which Slim Jim duly fell for, giving back the material with interest. In the interests of the team, Andy quickly agreed a draw at this point, and the Pugh Cup would be on the train to Cambridge that evening.

The results in full were:

Andrew Hon	0-1	Dharshan Kumaran
Andrew Jones	1/2-1/2	Jim Cavendish
Nick Jakubovics	0-1	Mike Gough
Jon Hastings	1-0	Ed Newman
Ed Holland	1-0	Tim Dickinson
Andrew Mendelson	1-0	Richard Penn
Benjamin Hague	1/2-1/2	Alex Lewis
Emilia Holland	1/2-1/2	Heidi Heron

And so on to the dinner, kindly provided by our sponsors, Watson, Farley and Williams. As usual, the alcohol flowed freely, and the meal was followed by speeches. The Oxford President somehow managed to explain the absence of two of his players as being due to a computer spell-check error. The Cambridge President was rather more adventurous, and decided to explain to the gathered company the importance of the effect of testosterone levels on chess performance. Pointing out that the eventual winner of a game tended to have a higher *pre-match* testosterone level than their opponent (as explained in the peppermint *Dragon*), he concluded by suggesting this as a possible explanation of the Cambridge victory. Fortunately even Sir Stuart and Lady Milner-Barry were amused.

Other speeches were also made. Ray Keene gave the same speech that he's given for the past five years, which I shan't repeat; firstly for the benefit of all those going to next year's match, and secondly because it wasn't particularly amusing anyway. Ed stood up and pointed out that last year he had thanked the Oxford team for turning up, but unfortunately this year he couldn't do that. Dharshan stood up and nearly fell over. He was, however, just conscious enough to play (and beat) our reserve, Mark Tan, after the meal, politely encouraging Mark to keep moving quickly every time he paused for thought.

And so to the journey home, where one member of our party (who's name, for the sake of their reputation, will be mentioned neither here, nor indeed for the remainder of the article) decided that the interior of the train needed redecorating. Meanwhile, on being told that it was his responsibility to write the Varsity report (hmmm, he seems to have failed on that score!) and that quotes were always good, Mark got out pen and paper to scribble down anything applicable. This, of course, led to a huge number of quotes but very little that would be printable.

Emilia, being rather more sober than her brother Eddie, quite sensibly distanced herself from us during the journey. Messrs Hague and Jakubovics then took the opportunity to quiz Jon on his love life, but no comment was forthcoming. Andy Mendelson was running around with his camera taking embarrassing photos, which the editors have decided not to print. I was feeling nervous about a rather valuable trophy that was currently my responsibility.

Fortunately, the trophy had a safe journey to Cambridge, and indeed all other major disasters were also averted when Ben honourably declared "Plan" upon tying Andy Hon's shoelaces to the train seat.

And so a successful day drew to a close.

□ Andrew Mendelson

■ Richard Penn

*Varsity Match, Board Six*

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♙g5 ♘e4  
5 ♙f4

A rather innocuous continuation, which has the advantage of obscurity. An adventurous alternative is 5 cxd5 Nxc3 6 h4.

5... ♘xc3 6 bxc3 ♙g7 7 e3 c5

7... dxc4 8 Bxc4 Nd7 is interesting, angling for ...Nb6-d5 or ...e5. For example 9 Nf3?! Nb6 10 Bb3 Nd5 forces the exchange of White's light-squared bishop.

8 ♘f3 ♘c6 9 ♚b1 cxd4

9... O-O is better, maintaining the tension in the centre.

10 cxd4 ♙a5+ 11 ♙d2 ♙xd2+ 12 ♙xd2 dxc4 13 ♙xc4 b6??

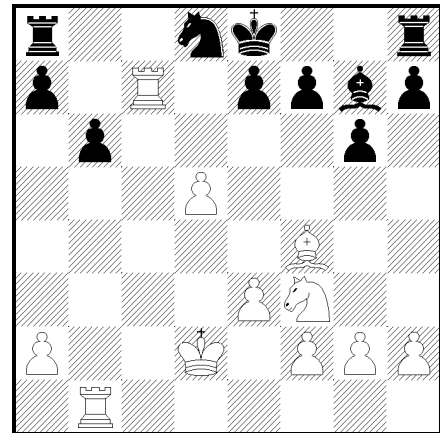
Black seeks to rid himself of his b-pawn problem, but this is disastrous. 13... O-O is far better, but White is still well on top after 14 Rhc1; Black's passive opening play has been an abject failure.

14 ♙b5 ♙d7 15 ♚hc1 ♘d8

Forced. 15... Rc8?? 16 d5!

16 ♙xd7+ ♙xd7 17 ♚c7+ ♙e8 18 d5!

Bottling up the knight and deciding the game – Black can hardly move a piece.



18... f6 19 ♚bc1!

19 d6 looks crushing, but Black has 19...e5.

A) 20 Re7+ Kf8 21 Bg3 Nf7 22 Rc1 Nxd6 23 R1c7 Nf5 leaves White with the problem of how to recycle the knight and bishop.

B) 20 Rxc7 Nf7! 21 Bg3 (21 Bh6 Nxh6 22 Rc1 Nf5 23 Rgc7 Nxd6 covers c8) 21... Kf8; 22 Rxf7 Kxf7 allows Black to round up the d-pawn.

19... ♚g8 20 ♘d4 f5

I was hoping for 20... Kf7 21 d6 Bf8 22 dxe7 Bxe7 23 Rxe7+! Kxe7 24 Rc7+ Ke8 25 Bd6 Nf7 26 Re7+ Kd8 (26... Kf8 27 Ne6 mate) 27 Nc6+ Kc8 28 Rc7 mate.

21 ♘e6 ♙f6

21... Nxe6 22 dxe6 is obviously terminal, but now White liquidates into a winning ending.

22 ♚c8 ♚xc8 23 ♚xc8 ♙d7 24 ♚c7+ ♙e8 25 ♘xd8 ♙xd8 26 ♚xa7 ♚g7 27 ♙c7+ ♙c8 28 ♙xb6

And White converted the ending 20 moves later.

This straightforward win captured the Best Game prize, which doesn't say terribly much for the rest of the team. However, the importance of this game should not be underestimated, as the sight of their captain getting mangled straight out of the opening so dispirited the rest of the Oxford team that they could only put up token resistance, and they were put to the sword by the rampaging Cambridge barbarian hordes (actually, Ben only drew). I won't be here next year to provide inspiration, so let me take this opportunity to wish the team well for future Oxbridge encounters, and to thank WFW for the cool venue, the booze and the opportunity to meet Raymond Keene, my favourite author.

# University Championships, 1996

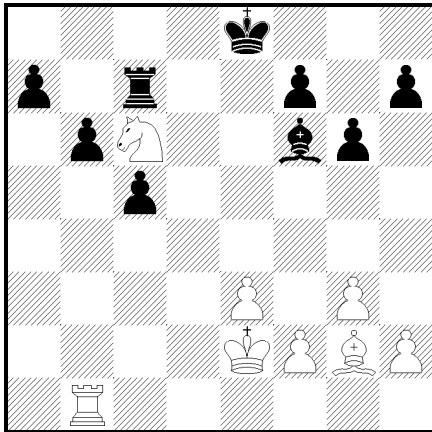
by The Tourney Sec

This year's Univ Champs were held in the Bowett Room, at Queens', which proved an excellent venue despite being located directly next to the squash courts. The turnout of 19 competitors was reasonable and, although neither of our confirmed IM's was competing, a strong field was headed by Mark Ferguson who'd just obtained his third IM norm at Hastings, so was practically there - well done Mark!

Unlike last year, the first round was not devoid of surprises. Newcomer Tan Boon Keong took a flying start in his first ever tournament by beating Martin Hasenbusch, Chris Kreuzer extracted half-a-point from your humble scribe, and Edward Griffiths had to work exceedingly hard to gain his expected quota of points from Martin Ogden.

The second round continued in much the same vein. Demis Hassabis and Fred Pollitz each dropped half-a-point to Mssrs Griffiths and Tan respectively whilst, upfloated to play "The Ancient One", I played out the following ending:

- M.H.Thornton (183, but no Koala)
- P.N.Best (172 + water bottle)



After electing to play a perhaps dubious sacrifice in a 5 g3 Grünfeld, leaving me with two pawns for a piece, but including 3 passed queenside pawns, I'd been having problems getting the pawns into any sort of motion. However, they were about to come into their prime.....

25...c4□

Otherwise Kd3-c4, and White can win at leisure.

26 ♔d2 ♔d7 27 ♘d4?!

27 Nb4 is probably better as d5 looks like the natural square for the horse.

27... ♖c5 28 ♙b7 ♖a5!

Preventing Ba6, after which Black would have nothing.

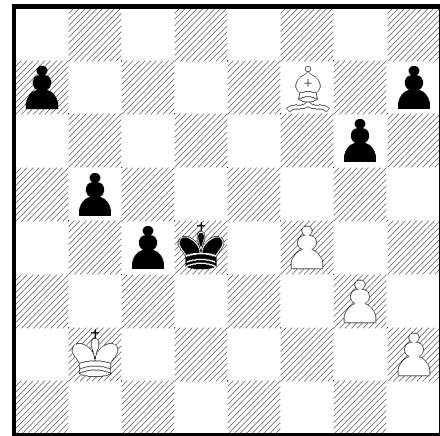
29 ♔c3 ♔c7 30 ♙f3 b5!?□ 31 ♔c2

Hitting b5 and threatening Bd5, hitting f7.

31... ♙b6 32 ♙d5 ♖a2+!? 33 ♖b2

Or 33 Kc1 Bxd4 34 exd4 Rxf2 35 Bxc4 a6+=

33... ♖×b2+ 34 ♔×b2 ♔c5 35 ♙×f7 ♙×d4+ 36 e×d4 ♙×d4 37 f4



[Quote: "If I had to pick someone to win an ending like this, it would be Mark Thornton" — PNB to RML about MHT's ending in the Kent match (he subsequently drew it).]

My illusions about Mark's endgame technique having been shattered weeks ago, I have to play for a win....

37...a5! 38 ♙g8?

Mark also plays for a win. But once the pawns reach a4, b4 and c4 there's no stopping them. The best White can hope for is a draw with 38 Be8, keeping Alfie at a5. White can't win even then, since to progress towards queening he has to play f5 or h5. Black can then exchange and win the f-pawn by pushing his queenside pawns to force the bishop away from its defence. Harry queens (or rather fails to queen) on the wrong-coloured square.

38...b4! 39 ♙×h7 a4 40 ♙×g6 c3+ 41 ♔c1 b3

△...a3-a2-a1.

42 ♙f7 ♔d3

Intending 43...b2+ 44 Kb1 c2+ 45 Kxb2 Kd2 -+. After 46 Ka3 c1(Q)+ 47 Kxa4, the ending might be playable for White if

only his King wasn't so trapped. eg Black has 47...Qc5 threatening ...Kc3, and can no doubt check the White king until he forks the bishop.

43 ♖g6+ ♔c4

△...Kb4 and then ...a3-a2-a1.

44 ♖b1 a3 45 f5 a2 46 f6 a1(♞) 0-1

The board next to this saw Christopher Kreuzer continuing his way towards the top boards (notes by CK)

□ C.Kreuzer (128)

■ A.Stille (139)

*Modern Defence*

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♖g7 3 ♖c4 c6 4 ♘c3 e6  
5 ♘f3 d5 6 e×d5 c×d5 7 ♖b5+ ♘d7  
8 ♖×d7+ ♘×d7 9 0-0 ♘e7 10 ♘e2 0-0  
11 ♖f4 ♖c8 12 c3 ♘c6 13 ♞d2 ♘a5 14 b3  
♘f6 15 ♖h6 ♘c6 16 ♖×g7 ♔×g7

With the demise of Black's bishop, holes begin to appear in his kingside. However, my c3 pawn is a terminal weakness on the queenside which Black proceeds to target.

17 ♘g3 ♞b6 18 ♖fe1 ♖c7 19 h4 h5  
20 ♞g5

Maybe a slower attack involving g4 is more prudent, but I decided on a swift and "decisive" onslaught. Really I am bluffing here! I could see no clear attack other than sacrifices on h5 followed by g4. I also need to be aware of the following: 20...Nh7 21 Nxh5+ Kh8 22 Qh6 gxh5 23 Ng5 f6 24 Nxh7 Rxh7 25 Qxf8 mate. The important thing here is to retain my knight on f3, ready to leap into g5 in the above variation.

20...♘e7 21 ♖e3 ♖fc8

Actually 21...Nh7 is playable now as in the above variation 23 Qh6?? loses a piece to Nf5. In the text line, both armies are committed to attacks on opposite sides of the board.

22 ♘e5 ♖×c3

If instead 22...Nh7 23 Nxh5+ Kg8 24 Nf6+ wins a pawn and exposes Black's king. If 23...Kh8 instead then 24 Nxf7+ Kg8 leaves three of White's pieces en prise, but after 25 Nh6+ Kf8 26 Qf4+ Nf5 (or 26...Ke8 after which both 27 Qf7+ or 27 Ng7+ are good) 27 g4 this must favour White. So 22...Nh7 is bad, but aggressive play does need to be justified against moves like this, and indeed against the text....

23 ♘×h5+ ♘×h5 24 ♞×e7?

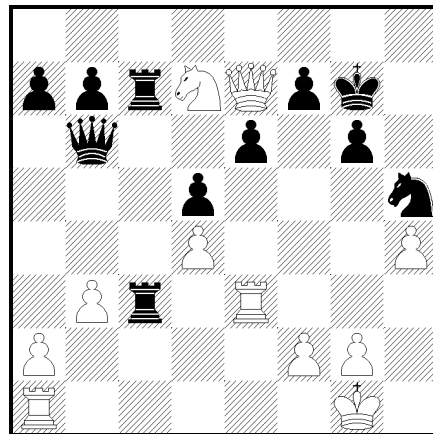
Before this, White has to play Rxc3 to avoid losing to the variation mentioned below. After this move the resulting variation and perpetuals are similar to the game line. (In fact, White needs to play this before Nxh5+

since 23 Nxh5+ Nxh5 24 Rxc3 can be met by 24...f6! — PNB)

24...♖8c7?

Missing a win with 24...R3c7, keeping the back rank defended. The text move 25 Nd7 now loses a piece to 25...Qc6, and after 25 Qg5 Rc1+ 26 Rxc1 Rxc1+ 27 Kh2 Qxd4 (threatening 28...Qf4 and an exchange of queens), White's attacking days are over and he is losing.

25 ♘d7



25...♞×d4

Equally possible is 25...Rxe3, since White needs his rook in some variations. White now has no better than perpetual check after 26 Qf8+ Kh7 27 Qxf7+ and now:

(i) 27...Kh6 28 Qf8+ Kh7 29 Qf7+

(ii) 27...Kh8 28 Qf8+ Kh7 29 Qf7+

(iii) 27...Ng7 28 Nf6+ Kh6 29 Ng8+ Kh7 30 Nf6+

Not playable, however, is 25...Qc6? as then 26 Qf8+ Kh7 27 Qxf7+ and now:

(i) 27...Kh6 28 g4! +—

(ii) 27...Kh8 28 Rxe6! +— (if 28...Rc1+ 29 Kh2!)

(iii) 27...Ng7 28 Nf6+ Kh6 29 g4! g5□ 30 hxg5+ Kxg5 31 Re5+ leading to mate.

Back to the game line:

26 ♞f8+ ♔h7 27 ♞×f7+ ♞g7?!

27...Ng7 perpetuals. After 27...Kh8 or Kh6, White cannot play 28 Rxe6 because of 28...Rc1+ 29 Re1 (29 Kh2 Qxh4#) Rxa1.

28 ♘f8+ ♔h6 29 ♞×g7+ ♘×g7 30 ♘×e6 ♘×e6 31 ♖×e6

The tornado has spun away! I am a pawn up, and Black has weak d and g-pawns. He needs both his rooks to exploit his passed pawn, so 31...Rc1+ should help me. (I don't agree. 31...Rc1+ 32 Re1 (or 32 Rxc1 Rxc1+ 33 Kh2 Rc2, winning back the pawn) 32...Rxa1 33 Rxa1 Rc2 is not easy for White to win — PNB)

31... ♖d7 32 g4 ♗g7 33 ♖ae1 ♗f7 34 g5 d4 35 ♖f6+ ♗g7 36 ♖ee6 d3 37 ♖×g6+ ♗h7 38 ♖d6 ♖cc7 39 ♗f1

Necessary to stop the d-pawn. The text reply is forced, but gains me the tempo needed to circle my f-pawn.

39... ♖c1+ 40 ♗g2 ♖cc7 41 ♗f3 d2 42 ♖h6+ 1-0

On the top board, however, Mark Ferguson maintained his 100% record, even if he did look a little sheepish after move 35. (Notes by Mark Davey)

□ M.Ferguson (216)

■ M.Davey (171)

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♘b5 d6 5 d4 e×d4 6 ♘×d4 ♘d7 7 O-O ♘×d4 8 ♘×d7+ ♖×d7 9 ♖×d4 ♘e7 10 b3!?

A cunning idea: the long term threat on the long diagonal poses numerous problems for Black, mainly because the White queen on d4 is strong and difficult to budge.

10... O-O 11 ♘b2 ♖g4 12 ♖ad1

Allowing Rd3-g3/h3 as an attacking manoeuvre.

12... ♖fe8 13 ♖fe1 a6 14 a4 h5

Intending ...h4, to prevent a rook from using g3.

15 ♖d3 h4 16 h3 ♖g5 17 ♘c1 ♖g6

Black is just generally stuck here — I don't see that he has a decent plan, or indeed any plan at all due to his Be7 being in the way, and White's threat of a future f4.

18 ♗h1 ♖ac8 19 ♖f3 ♘d7

Deciding to take the e5 square since White can't play f4 immediately. This should hassle the exposed white rook somewhat to offset the tempo lost shifting the knight when White does play f4 sooner or later.

20 ♘d5 c5?!

I thought this would give me some play, but it weakens d6 horrendously.

21 ♖d2 c4

Not good, but it's hard to see good moves for the dark side.

22 b4

I was expecting something like Rf5 (ΔNf4), where the Black queen is in trouble. 22... Nf6 would simply lose the d-pawn.

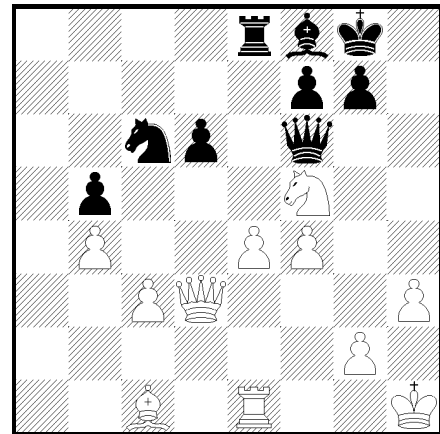
22... b5 23 a×b5 a×b5 24 ♖a3

24 Rf5 is still playable. Black is a little short of time now, so is rolling off the moves relatively quickly.

24... ♘e5 25 ♖a6 c3 26 ♘×c3 ♖c4 27 f4 ♘c6 28 ♘d5 ♘d4 29 ♘e3

I'd completely missed this move. Now White can just clean up.

29... ♖c6 30 ♖×c6 ♘×c6 31 ♘f5 ♘f8 32 ♘×h4 ♖g3 33 ♘f5 ♖g6 34 c3 ♖f6 35 ♖d3?



This gives Black the glimmer of a chance.... 35... ♖×f5! 36 e×f5 ♖×e1+ 37 ♗h2 ♖×c1

Although Black has rook, knight and bishop for the White queen, his pieces are unco-ordinated and his queenside pawns are difficult to defend and likely to be picked off in the near future.

38 ♖e3 ♖c2 39 ♖d3 ♖c1 40 ♖d2 ♖a1 41 ♖d5!

A great square for the queen. Now watch all of Black's pieces become tied up trying to hold on to the queenside pawns.

41... ♘a7 42 g4

The kingside attack will kill Black who has no useful pieces to defend himself with.

42... ♖a6 43 g5 ♖c6 44 g6 ♖c7 45 h4

Qf3-h5 may finish the game sooner.

45... ♘c8

The knight comes over to defend, but at the expense of a rather important b-pawn.

46 ♖×b5 ♘e7 47 h5 d5

A vain attempt to release the bishop.

48 ♖b8 ♖×c3 49 ♖e8 ♖c8 50 ♖×f7+ ♗h8 51 f6 ♘g8 52 f×g7+ ♘×g7 53 ♖×d5 ♖c2+ 54 ♗h3 ♖c3+ 55 ♗g2 ♖c2+ 56 ♗f3 ♖c3+ 57 ♗e2 ♖c8 1-0

The following morning saw everyone arrive fresh and ready for round 3. Well, apart from Mr Cristinace of course, who staggered in twenty minutes late as usual. He was soon awakened by the sight of Mark F playing the dark side of the Marshall gambit against him: when the dust finally settled three-and-a-half hours later, Mark emerged with Q+3 vs Q+2, all on the king-side, and managed to convert it.

Mark Davey's 12:30 game of American Football looked in doubt at midday as in his game against the President each player

had ominously advanced passed pawns, but somehow he managed to swap everything off and agree a draw. I ended Tan's successful run, whilst Chris Howell took Mark Thornton's tournament from not good to bad (soon to become worse). The game Pollitz – Griffiths can only be described as bizarre (notes by Fred Pollitz):

□ **F.Pollitz (2199 ELO)**

■ **E.Griffiths (E170)**

1 e4 e6 2 d3 d5 3 ♘d2 c5 4 ♗gf3 ♘c6 5 g3 g6

This looks like a new idea to me. Usual is ...Nf6, ...Be7 etc.

6 c3 ♗f6 7 ♖e2 ♖e7 8 ♙g2 ♙g7 9 O-O O-O 10 ♚e1 ♚e8 11 ♗f1 b6 12 e5

I thought about 12 Bg5, but after 12...h6 13 Bxf6 Bxf6 14 e5 Bg7, I didn't see any way to improve White's position.

12...♗g4

I think Black is taking an unnecessary risk putting the knight on g4, where it is undefended, instead of d7.

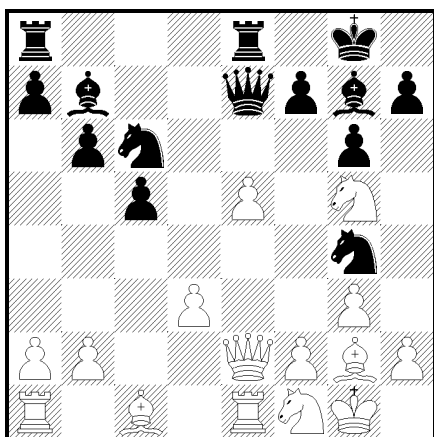
13 c4?

With Black's unprotected KN and my white-squared bishop staring down the h1–a8 diagonal I thought this would put a monkey wrench into Black's position. Actually the opposite is true. After 13 Bf4 f6 14 exf6 Nxf6 (14...Bxf6 15 h3) 15 Ne5, White has an iron grip on the centre. If Black had played 12...Nd7, then after 13 Bf4 f6 14 exf6 Bxf6 White would have to consider 15 d4, eg. 15...cxd4 16 cxd4 Bxd4? 17 Nxd4 Nxd4 18 Qd3 followed by Bxd5.

13...♙b7! 14 c×d5

Consistent but suicidal. White has to play 14 Bf4, though after 14...f6 15 exf6 Nxf6 16 Ne5 Nd7, White cannot maintain his centre.

14...e×d5 15 ♗g5



15...♙×e5!

Even 15...Nge5 is convincing.

16 ♙f3! ♙×e1 17 ♙×f7+ ♙h8 18 ♙×b7

18 Bd5 (aiming for the smothered mate with 19 Qg8+ R×g8 20 Nf7 mate) doesn't work because of 18...Nce5 (covering f7) 19 Qxb7 Qf2+ and mate next move.

18...♗d4! 19 ♗h3

To prevent ...Ne2+ and ...Nxf2 mate.

19...♗e2+ 20 ♙h1 ♗d4?!

Aiming for mate with 21...Qxf2. However, this gives White a chance to seriously complicate the game. After 20...Nxc1 I might have resigned (although post-game analysis showed that White still has some chances).

21 ♙e3!! ♙×a1 22 ♗g5 ♙g7 23 ♗f7+ ♙g8 24 ♙d5

Seeing that Edward had less than 5 minutes on his clock for his next 13 moves I offered him a draw. With a few seconds left on his clock he accepted.

1/2–1/2

How should Black play for a win? 24...Bd4 25 Ng5+ Kh8 26 Qb7 repeats the position after White's 22nd move. If 24...Kf8 then 25 Ng5 actually wins for White. 24...h6 looks like the only promising try. Then 25 Nd8+? Kh7 28 Qxa8 Rxe3 loses for White, but after 25 N×h6+ Kh7 26 N×g4 it will be very difficult for Black to consolidate. For example 26...Qxb2 27 Be4 Rad8 28 Qg5 Rxe4 29 dxe4 Re8 30 Nd2 and the situation is still critical: 30...Re6 31 Qh4+ Kg8 32 Qd8+ or 30...Qxa2 31 e5 or 30...c4 31 h4 c3 32 h5 are all dangerous for Black!

In the afternoon the players were inspired by the sight of the great Matthew Turner proudly carrying in the Championship Trophy (sporting its new base) in a couple of Sainsbury's bags. Actually it only inspired Mark and Demis to take a quick draw, but your (by now not quite so humble) scribe managed to move into the joint lead by getting the better of James Wright in a knight, bishop and pawns ending. Together with Demis, the other players only half-a-point off the pace were David Cristinacce who had finally put an end to Mr Kreuzer's run, and Martin Hasenbusch who had continued his recovery from the bad start by beating Fred Pollitz in another bizarre game. Edward Griffiths and Chris Howell stood a further half-point back after their game ended in a truce.

The Graduate Centre proved the ideal venue for the night's entertainment with the possibility of the Univ Champs being decided over a game of darts! As the evening drew to

a close, Mr Griffiths, Mr Ferguson and myself were the only remaining survivors of a giant game of killer when Edward, on killer, came out with the amazing gambit: “Mark, there’s a good chance we’ll meet tomorrow afternoon — if I aim for Philip rather than for you will you promise to play 1 e4”! As Mark also reached killer, offers went the other way also, leaving me to survive the onslaught. Sadly for the two of them, by the time they’d got as far as 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 f4 c5 6 c3 Nc6 7 Ndf3 Qb6 8 h4!! (I have blatantly added these exclamation marks for effect: see article on Werfen congress, this issue) I put together a few good (lucky??!) sets of darts and killed them both off.

*[It only remains to note that the two players didn’t meet the following day anyway, but that the following evening revenge was had when, in an 8-way killer, all the other 7 players (apart from IM Matthew Turncoat) decided to kill me off first and I found survival a little tricky!]*

Round 5, and another day. Mark Thornton complained about being drawn on board 5 again, as it hadn’t done him many favours so far — and wasn’t about to as he took the silver medal against James Wright. On board one, Best-Ferguson was not going according to plan for the second player:

□ P.N.Best (172)

■ M.Ferguson (216)

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♘f6 4 d3

Call me a wimp if you like....but I’m sure he knows more theory than I do!

4... ♙e7 5 O-O O-O 6 c3 d6 7 ♙b3 ♘a5 8 ♙c2 c5 9 h3 b6 10 ♙e3

I thought this was theory so played it despite the fact I couldn’t see what it was really doing there. No harm can come of it, but the tempo could have been more usefully used.

10... ♙b7 11 ♘bd2 ♙e8 12 ♙e1 h6 13 ♘f1 ♙f8 14 ♘g3 g6 15 ♘h2 ♙h7?!

In keeping with the highly aggressive game!? I’d rather expected 14...d5 although 14...g6 is OK. But 15...d5 really needs to be played.

16 f4 ♙g7 17 ♘f3

Mark thought this should go to g4 later, but I had my eye on the h4 square. I’m not sure which is better - certainly this way seemed to work.

17... ♘c6 18 ♙b3 ♙d7 19 f5 d5 20 ♘h4!?

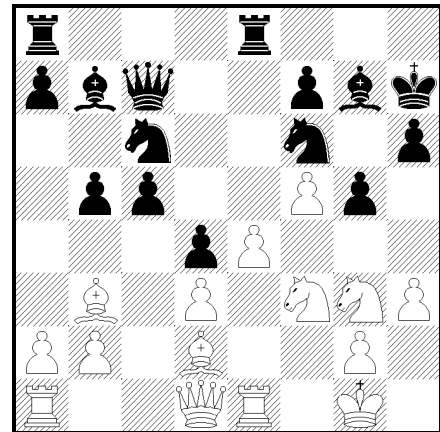
Keeping Derek at d5. eg 20...dxe4 21 Bxf7! (then not 21...Qxf7?? 22 fxc6+)

20... ♘a5 21 ♙a4 b5 22 ♙c2 d4 23 cxd4 exd4

Mark confessed that he nearly played 23...cxd4?, but after 24 Bd2 Nc6 25 Bb3 Black has real problems.

24 ♙d2 ♘c6 25 ♙b3 g5 26 ♘f3 ♙c7

White was threatening all sorts of sacs on g5, but this move hits the g3 knight.



27 ♘h5!! ♘e5

27...Nxb5? 28 Nxb5+ hxb5 29 Qxb5+ Kg8 30 f6! Bxf6 31 Rf1 and it’s all over. Also Black had to guard against the renewed threat of 28 Bxb5.

28 ♘xf6?!

Better was 28 Nxe5 Rxe5 29 h4 when Black’s position looks set to crumble. The move played also works, but makes it more difficult for White. I was running a little low on time after spending a long time making Nh5 work.

28... ♙xf6 29 ♘xe5 ♙xe5 30 ♙h5 ♙g7 31 h4 ♙h8 32 ♙g5 ♙d8 33 ♙f4 ♙e7

33...Rook moves, 34 e5 followed by f6 is a little terminal. Black has to give up the exchange.

34 ♙ac1

Patience! The Re5 is going nowhere so I might as well put my pieces on good squares.

34... h5 35 ♙g3 g4 36 ♙f1 ♙f8 37 ♙xe5

Mr Turner suggested that I still don’t have to take the rook, claiming Bxb4 is nothing to worry about. Maybe so, but my pieces are on ideal squares now, so why not get on with it?

37... ♙xe5 38 f6!

The move I’d been setting up. If White doesn’t play this he’ll have big problems.

38... ♙d6 39 ♙f2

Intending 40 Qf5, or if 39...Bc8 then 40 Qc2.

39... ♙h6

For some reason I now had an unexplicable block. After 40 Qf5 Rxf6 41 Qxb5 I was worried that my queen was well away from



defending my king (whereas more pertinent is the fact it's killing his on f7, and White is totally winning!), and so missing Black's sacrificial tactic I opted instead for:

40 ♖c2? c4! 41 dxc4 d3! 42 ♖d2 ♗xf6  
43 ♗xf6 ♖xf6

Decision time:

(a) 44 Qg5 (not 44 Qf2? Bd4+ 45 Kh1/h2 Qxg5 46 hxg5 Bxe4 and Black should have at worst a draw. I thought this was probably lost, but looking at it further, White has reasonable drawing chances.

(b) Some random toss to demonstrate that White is no better than 172 coz he occasionally (frequently??!) blunders:

44 ♖xd3? ⊕ > ♗ d4+ 0-1

On board 2, Demis finally defeated David. Although he had a winning position, he only had 1 second left on his clock when David's flag fell! Martin Hasenbusch also moved to four points by beating Ed Griffiths, when the latter player dropped a piece as the time control approached.

In the final round, Mark clinched the title by destroying Martin Hasenbusch, whilst

Demis took second with a draw against your (more humble than he would have been if he'd beaten Mark) scribe. David, Fred Pollitz and Mark Davey all won to take a share of third prize. The round also saw the shortest game of the tournament:

□ M.Ogden (115)

■ B.K.Tan (E155)

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 e3 ♗d6  
5 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 6 ♖a4+

Winning back the piece?

6...b5!

No!

0-1

So, the final scores:

1st	5½ / 6	Mark Ferguson
2nd	4½ / 6	Demis Hassabis
3rd=	4 / 6	Philip Best
		David Cristinacce
		Mark Davey
		Fred Pollitz
U165 Grading	4 / 6	Martin Hasenbusch
U140 Grading	2½ / 6	Cristopher Kreuzer

# The Road To Edgbaston

as walked with Philip Best

Most of you will by now be aware of our successful run in the County Championships, culminating in a famous victory over Middlesex in the National Final. This result was a great triumph for the club, and was brought about by the mixing of three major ingredients, necessary to bake a championship winning side.

Firstly, of course, we needed players of sufficient calibre — without 30 million pounds with which to buy them (not that that policy seems to work long-term....) we had to rely instead on various Admissions Tutors. In 1994 they did a splendid job providing us with two IM's and a handful of 180+ players. Combining these with the club's strength-in-depth and, in particular, the willingness of, dare I call them our 'old-timers', to continue to represent us in crucial matches, we were capable of fielding a team worthy of competing with any other.

The second ingredient needed was luck. There are those that say that you make your own luck — this is undoubtedly true to some extent. For example, our relative youth gave us an advantage in time scrambles towards the end of a five hour playing session when older opponents were tiring, and indeed many matches were won right at the death that way. But given the number of occasions where we won matches  $8\frac{1}{2}$ – $7\frac{1}{2}$ , or even on board count, nobody is going to persuade me that we didn't have just a little bit of fortune on our side. Still, fortune favours the brave...

In my opinion, the area where we score most highly is the crucial third ingredient: team spirit and the will to win. Confidence ran high all year. Inspired by the upper boards, lower board players were also performing excellently, usually against stronger opponents. Team spirit remained high from the start, but never more so than in the semi-final when players were prepared to break from revision only days before their exams (or from hang-overs the day after their last exam) and in the final itself, when many travelled hundreds of miles to be present. The general attitude of the team was what clinched the trophy this season.

In this report I don't intend to dwell on our qualification as Champions of the SCCU, since this has been reported in bits and pieces elsewhere. Suffice it to say that it was achieved predominantly due to  $10\frac{1}{2}$ – $9\frac{1}{2}$

victories over Kent and Essex, and a 12–8 squashing of Middlesex.

Nor do I intend to say much about our quarter-final match against Staffordshire, although for somewhat different reasons — as we fielded the strongest Cambridgeshire side I've ever seen (with all 16 players FIDE rated), I simply wasn't selected and can only pass on word-of-mouth information. It seems that although we outgraded Staffs most of the way down, this proved to be a close match. Both of the IM's, despite the presence of GM Jonathan Mestel allowing them to play one board lower than usual, clocked up their first losses for Cambridgeshire, but, as has become traditional, we pulled through in the end. Demis picked up the final half-point to secure an  $8\frac{1}{2}$ – $7\frac{1}{2}$  victory.

Our semi-final match against Hampshire was scheduled for June 3rd, slap bang in the middle of the exam period, so was always going to be a tricky match to get a strong team out for. Fortunately, by arranging a venue in central London (the Chess and Bridge Centre on Euston Road), we were able to persuade our contingent of London-based players to play. This proved vital as we only managed to find 16 players in total, without so much as a reserve. In the absence of Dictator Hon to captain the side, I was appointed as his deputy, and also had the pleasure of driving the minibus for the first time.

The team was much weaker over the lower boards than in the quarter-final and, whilst filling in the team sheet, I overheard their captain confidently telling one of his players that they would outgrade us. Having seen our sheet, however, he quickly amended his comment to "Well, we'll outgrade them on the lower boards but they've got an edge at the top". Playing an IM on board four usually does give you an advantage there.

The combination of driving, struggling to park a minibus in central London, and captaining the side didn't do wonders for my chess, and I'm afraid I succumbed in a relatively short time — though not as quickly as Mr Boyle who gifted his opponent a rook in a fairly level middlegame. 2–0 down was not an ideal start. Although it gave me an opportunity to watch the other boards (something I'd been doing too much of whilst still playing my own game!), I didn't really feel I'd played a true Captain's innings.

On board eleven, Mr Noden emerged out of the opening two pawns to the good, but with his opponent having a lot of play. It looked to me that Nick gradually reduced the compensation to the point where he had two pawns for nothing, and when he finally got there he just seemed to give the two pawns away. Maybe his version of the story is different, but this game ended in a draw. At least we were off the mark.

On board ten, Ben Hague just seemed to get completely hacked up — rather a role reversal for him — but next to him, unperturbed, Mark won the best game prize for this effort (notes by MHT):

□ **Mark Thornton (Cambs, 196)**

■ **Matthew Anderton (Hants, 195)**

*Modern Benoni Defence*

Normally, when I annotate one of my games, I find that my play has not been nearly as good as I originally thought. It usually turns out my opponent had many opportunities to turn the tables on me, but didn't spot them. In other words, I played badly, but I won because my opponent played even worse. This game, however, is different. I didn't think it was that good at the time. But now I feel that, with the possible exception of my 12th move, I am happy with every move that I played. And all the things that I was scared of during the game turned out to be ghosts in the analysis. I also feel that it is typical of my style. First of all, I block my opponent's play on 'his' side of the board. Then, I slowly and logically carry out a plan on 'my' side of the board. In the end, the measures that he takes to prevent my plan are so extreme that his position falls apart in time trouble. If any of my games could be labelled "Thortonesque" then I feel that this is the one.

**1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 c5 4 d5 e×d5  
5 c×d5 d6 6 ♘c3 g6 7 ♙g5 h6 8 ♙h4  
♙g7 9 e3 a6?!**

Black tries to improve on the main line, which goes 9...g5 10 Bg3 Nh5 11 Bb5+ Kf8, when Bellin and Ponzetto (*Mastering the Modern Benoni and the Benko Gambit*) reckon that Black's loss of castling rights "has no great importance, especially as after ...Nxg3, hxg3 the Rh8 is quite usefully placed." I disagree with this assessment, which is one of the reasons why I play this line.

**10 ♘d2!**

Preserving my Bh4 by taking control of the h5 square.

**10...b5?! 11 a4! b4 12 ♘e4**

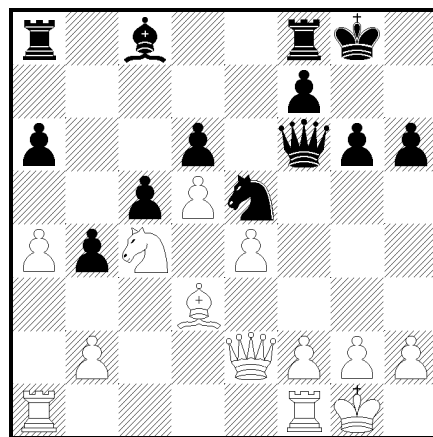
If White's K-pawn were on e4, then Black's Q-side expansion would be quite justified. At the time, using the vacant e4 square for my knight seemed very logical, but now I wonder whether the slower 12 Nb1!? may be even better, planning Nc4 and Nbd2. After 12 Ne4, 12...g5 13 Bg3 Nxe4 (13...Nxd5? 14 Nc4!±) 14 Nxe4 Bxb2 is poor. 15 Rb1 Be5 16 Bxe5 dxe5 17 Nxc5 or 15...Bc3+ 16 Nxc3 bxc3 gives White an advantage, but he can also try for more with 15 Be2!? threatening Nxd6, Bh5 and Nxf7. Taking the exchange would then be very dangerous for Black.

In the game, Black now sacrifices a couple of tempi to force some exchanges, which eases his position.

**12...♙f5! 13 ♘×f6+ ♙×f6 14 ♙×f6 ♚×f6  
15 e4 ♙c8!**

d7 has to be kept vacant for developing the knight, and the Ra8 can always be developed by Ra7-e7.

**16 ♙d3! ♘d7 17 0-0 ♘e5 18 ♚e2 0-0  
19 ♘c4**



If Black had ever taken on b2, White would have been compensated by a strong breakthrough in the centre, e.g. 18...Nxd3 19 Qxd3 Qxb2 20 Nc4 Qf6 21 f4, and 22 e5 cannot be prevented.

White now conceived the plan which won him the game, which was to blockade his opponents Q-side pawn majority with his bishop on c4 and force the advance of his central pawn majority by f4 and e5.

**19...♘×c4 20 ♙×c4 ♚e8 21 ♚fe1 ♚a7  
22 ♚ad1 ♚f4?**

Black's only method of preventing White's plan is to play ...f5 and ...fxe4 as quickly as possible, thus crippling White's central pawn majority. After 22...Rae7 23 f3 a5?! 24 Rd3 Qg7 25 Re3 White prevents this as 25...f5 26 Bb5 and exf5 gives him total control of the e-file. Black would then face

a difficult defence. Hence, he should have considered 22...Rae7 23 f3 Qg7!?, when the threat of 24...f5 forces White to snatch a pawn. After 24 Bxa6 Bxa6 25 Qxa6 Qxb2 26 Qxd6, White is still better, but Black has randomised the position somewhat and can hope for counterplay with his queenside pawns.

The move played gives White some free tempi to consolidate his position and misplaces Black's queen.

**23 g3 ♖g4 24 f3 ♜h3 25 ♜d3 ♜ae7 26 ♜e3**

Black is now positionally defenceless, as 26...f5 loses a pawn to 27 Bxa6. He was also heading for terrible time trouble, with only 10 minutes left to reach move 40. In contrast, White had over an hour left on his clock.

**26...a5 27 f4 ♖g4 28 ♜f2 g5?!**

Desperate situations call for desperate measures. But 'waiting sensibly' would have been a more stubborn defensive strategy.

**29 ♜e2 ♜h3 30 ♜f1 ♜h5 31 ♜g2!**

White consolidates his K-side before the final push. He now threatens 32 e5, as 32...gxf4 33 gxf4 dxe5 34 fxe5 Rxe5 35 Qg3+! no longer loses the queen to 35...Rg5.

**31...g4 32 ♜e2 ♜d7 33 b3 f6 34 ♜a6! 1-0**

Perhaps a little premature, but after 35 Qxd6 his position is falling apart at the seams. The problem of playing the remaining 7 moves in well under a minute also influenced his decision to quit early.

Around the same time, Eddie Holland gradually succumbed, Richard Little agreed a draw with slightly the better of a closed position that was going nowhere, and Jonny Parker halved out on board three in a game that looked like neither player had any real desire to play. An exchange and pawns down on bottom board, Karsten looked to be in trouble until his opponent played what can only be described as a hideous blunder, managing to gift back not only the exchange, but also to get his king and other rook forked in the same manoeuvre. A few minutes later Karsten cleaned up for a full point swindle. Those few minutes really turned the tide of the match as Mestel, Turner and Burgess all scored maximum points from some excellent games.

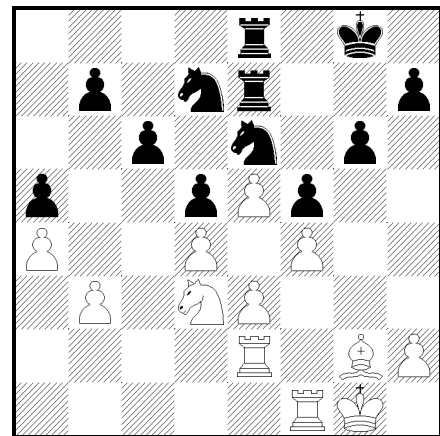
It was over another hour before another game finished. Phil Faulkner had hung on well on board 15, but his position had been gradually getting worse, and on board 6 an oscillating game finally went against Aron.

So, we needed 1½ points from the last two games to take the match on board count. Bill Hartston's game had reached a rook and pawn ending with Bill having a single extra pawn. When this reached rook and two against rook and one, I thought his winning chances were very slim but his position just seemed to keep improving. Board 8 was the real attention-grabber. Having advised Dave Lawson, as his captain, to take a draw if possible at the point when we were looking favourites at 6½-5½ up and seen him return to the board and make what appeared to be the least drawish move possible, I watched along with everyone else as the following unfolded (notes by DDAL):

□ KDF Gregory (199)

■ DDA Lawson (2240)

The position below had arisen shortly after the time control, without any real change in the nature of the game (i.e. we were both still playing badly). White has a clear advantage due to his extra space, greater queenside potential and protected passed pawn, compounded by the fact that Black only has 13 minutes to allegro oblivion, compared to White's 17.



**44 ♜c2 ♜a8 45 ♜fc1 ♜a6 46 ♜c3?! ♜b6**

Black's rook on b6 is a touch more active than White's on c3, but they're both rather sad.

**47 ♜f2 ♜g7 48 h4 ♜f7 49 ♜f3 h6 50 ♜h1 ♜e7 51 ♜e2 ♜f8 52 ♜d1**

White is about to defend b3 with his king, free his c3 rook and turn the screw on the kingside; d5 would then be too weak to play for ...c5 and Black's passivity would be complete. I had 5 minutes on my clock to my opponent's 8, so now was the time to consult our soothsayer, Phil Best. "A draw will probably secure us the match" said Phil, which seemed wise comment, "...so only play on if you don't risk losing." As I had been

brushing against defeat since about move 12, these last few words appeared less perceptive than our captain's usual advice, so I ignored them.

52...g5 53 h×g5 h×g5 54 ♖h8+

This tempting excursion, although threatening mate, is misguided. 54 fxg5 N×g5 55 Ke2, ΔNf4±, or 54...R×g5 55 Nf4± maintains White's advantage.

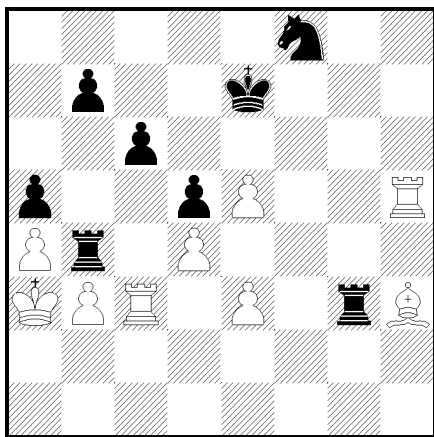
54...♙e7 55 ♘h5 ♘df8 56 f×g5 ♖×g5 57 ♘e2 ♖g1+ 58 ♙d2 ♖g2 59 ♘e1 ♖f2 60 ♘d3 ♖g2 61 ♙e1 ♖g1+ 62 ♘f1 ♖g7 63 ♖h6 ♘g5

With about 90 seconds to White's 150, I manage to exchange, without letting slip my positional disadvantage.

64 ♘c5 ♘e4 65 ♘×e4 f×e4 66 ♘h3 ♖g1+ 67 ♙d2 ♖b1 68 ♙c2 ♖g1 69 ♙b2 ♖g3 70 ♙a3

It isn't immediately clear how White can make progress, owing to the weakness of both e3 and b3. 70 Bc8!?, Δ71 Rh3 or 71 Bxb7!? is one idea. Perhaps bringing the king back to f2 and sacrificing b3 is another.

70...♖b4 71 ♙b2 ♖b6 72 ♙a3 ♖b4 73 ♖h5??



73 Kb2 Rb6 is a draw by threefold repetition, so 73 Bc8□ Rxd4 74 Bxb7 Rd3 should have happened, when the outcome may have rested with the clock.

73...♖×d4 74 e×d4 ♖×c3 75 ♖h6 ♖d3 76 e6 ♖×d4 77 ♖h8 e3 78 ♖g8 e2 79 ♖g7+ ♙e8 80 e7

80 Bg4 might have made the game go on for a few more dangerous moments.

80...e1=♖ 81 e×f8=♖+

81 Bd7+!!? Nxd7

81...♙×f8 82 ♖g2 ♖a1+ 0-1

83 Ra2 Rxa4+ and mate next move.

When this was over, with only seconds remaining on each clock, we turned round to

discover that Bill had also managed to convert his ending, and we took the match by 8½-7½.

That wasn't the end of the day's entertainment. On the journey down we'd been through a very dark heavy shower on the M11 — you know, the sort that gets you to turn your lights on — but arrived in London in brilliant sunshine. You've guessed it. Flat battery! The sight of a dozen people trying to push-start a minibus was quite an amusing one, but sadly the attempts were unsuccessful. Perhaps this was due to one player (who will remain nameless) simply walking along the road. When Mr Noden accused him of lack of effort, both here and in his game, he replied "Nick, when you get *your* IM title, I'll push-start your minibus for you". Alas this is a promise he's not likely to be called upon to fulfill.

It was now time for most to go to the pub whilst those 'reponsible' waited for the RAC. Ninety minutes later it was a lively minibus that headed home.

The final, held in Birmingham on July 27th, was to be a return match against Middlesex. This date clashed not with exams but with Graduation Weekend and despite Mr Thornton's thoughts that some people might postpone graduation to play in the match(?), none did. Postgraduates and third-years who graduated on the Friday could travel from Cambridge whilst others travelled from as far afield as Aberdeen. Mind you, if you live in Aberdeen you probably take every opportunity you can to get out...

With Andy Hon sunning himself on Spanish beaches, I deputised as captain again, although remembering my last attempt to drive, captain and play, I elected not to play. Those that were playing all made it safely to the venue, although not necessarily safely through the first few moves:

□ M Carlson

■ AR Jones (FM, 2300)

*Dutch*

1 d4 f5 2 ♘g5 c6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 e4 d×e4 5 ♘c4 g6?! 6 f3 ♘g7 7 f×e4 ♘×d4

7...Qxd4 8 Qe2±.

8 ♖d2 ♘f6??

"A high-class blunder is more than just an oversight: it is an oversight firmly underpinned by inconclusive analysis of the moves that were not played" - Bill Hartston, writing in *The Independent*.

9 ♘f7+!

1-0

And that was the end of board six. The Middlesex boards 15 and 16 hadn't even turned up yet.










As has become customary, things looked pretty bad at the start. The one board I thought looked to be in our favour (as did everyone else) was David Cristinacce on board 10, who was an exchange up for a little pressure out of the opening. Suddenly, whilst I was looking away, this game ended and David had lost. I'm still not sure quite what happened.

Hacker Hague was again one of the earlier finishers. This time, he played completely true to form in his favoured Morra gambit, simply sacrificing material until he found a way through to the king. Another of our earlier finishers was Graham on board 4:






□ Ben Martin

- Graham ‘erudite’ Burgess

## Alekhine Defence

1 e4  f6 2 e5  d5 3 d4 d6 4  f3  g4  
5  e2 c6 6 O-O  x f3 7  x f3 d x e5  
8 d x e5 e6 9  e2  d7 10 c4?!

According to Graham (who knows what he's talking about after all!) this move is bad. White should play 10 Nd2 ( $\Delta$ Nc4) instead of depriving his knight of the useful c4 square. Black is happy to recycle his knight to g6 where it attacks the weak e5 pawn.

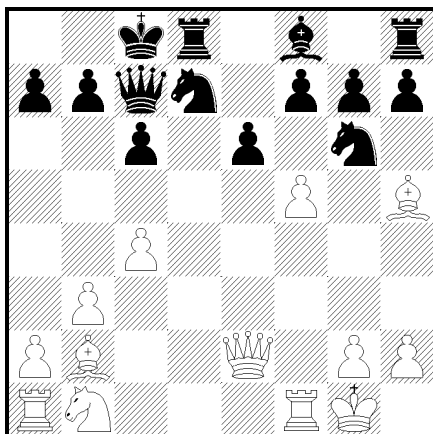
10... e7    11 b3?!    g6    12 b2    c7  
13 h5

After 13 Re1, 13...Bb4 14 Nd2 Ngxe5 wins the e5 pawn, so White complicates the position instead of trying to save the doomed pawn.

**13...  d×e5**

This looked a dangerous pawn to capture, but Graham knew exactly what he was doing. A quick glance at the clocks showed him to have used only around five minutes to this point!

14 f4  d7 15 f5 O-O-O!



Still in home preparation, Graham offers up his knight. However, after 16 fxd6 hxd6 17 Bf3 Bc5+ 18 Rf2 Qxh2+ 19 Kf1 Qh1# could be called compensation.





Now Black simply takes control in the centre.

16 f×e6 f×e6 17 ♘g4 ♙f4 18 ♔e4 ♜d6  
19 g3 ♘c5 20 ♔e3 ♙fd3 21 ♜d4 ♜e5  
22 ♜×e5 ♔×e5 23 ♔×e5 ♙×e5 24 ♜h3  
♙c7 25 b4

Time for the knights to go on a rampage...

25... cd3 26 a3 x c4 27 x e6 e3  
28 f3 e1! 29 f7+

29 Rxe3 Nc2-+

29... d6 30 b3 hf8 31 d2?

This move ends White's agony quickly but  
31 Nc3 Nf3+ 32 Kf2 Ng4+! 33 Kg2 (33 Kxf3  
Ne5+ -+) 33... Nd4 34 Rd1 Ne3+ -+ merely  
allows Black's knights to frolic a little longer.

31... ♖xf7 32 ♙xf7 ♘1c2 33 ♘c4+ ♔e7  
34 ♘xe3 ♙xa1 0-1

By this stage the last two Middlesex players had arrived, and their board 15 was soon making mincemeat out of Mark Davey. On board 16, Richard emerged with a reasonable position from the opening but the grading difference eventual made itself felt, and he went down.

On the higher boards we matched them well. Mark Thornton survived an onslaught on his king and then began to develop a good queen-side attack. Those of us watching thought that this would be another ‘Thortonesque’ game, but he never quite broke through and the game ended in a truce. A better result for us was the following game on board 5 (notes by DDAL):

□ **DDA Lawson (2240)**


■ PJ Sowray (213)

*Modern Defence*



I have decided to annotate this encounter to dispel any notion that I only win games by snaffling a loose pawn and clinging to it until the 8th rank. Very few players can be categorised so easily, and to do so often misses the intricate multiple motifs that abound within such games.

1 e4 g6 2 d4 g7 3 c3

I don't know much about the KID.....

3...d6 4  f3

...or the Austrian Attack.

4...a6 5 e2 d7 6 O-O b5 7 a4!?

7 Re1 Bb7 8 Bg5+ is apparently Grunfeld – Soltis, Lone Pine 1979, but it's not in my nature to copy GMs, especially as the move played forces Black to begin choosing from a selection of plans.

7...b4 8 ♖d5 ♜b8?!

8...a5 looks better, when 9 c3/Bd3/Bg5 all seem to give White an edge.

9 a5

Fixing the weakness on a6

9...♗gf6 10 ♖×f6+ e×f6!?

After 10...Nxf6, my opponent was concerned about 11 Bd3 (11 e5!?) O-O 12 Bg5 Bb7 13 Re1, which does indeed look both promising and simple.

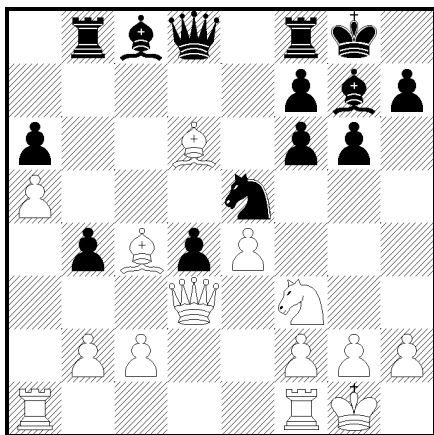
11 ♖c4 O-O 12 ♜d3 c5

12...Re8? 13 Re1 Ra8 14 Qb3+- and 12...Ra8 13 Bf4 Bb7 14 Rfe1 (Δ15 Qb3±) are not the way to make a fight of it.

13 ♖f4

Here is one of those multiple motifs: it's particularly embarrassing to balls up a position that you recognise to be intrinsically tremendous shortly after we've just gone 1-0 down in the match. Let's call this peer pressure. 13 Bxa6 Ra8 14 Bxc8 Qxc8 (Δ15...c4) 15 b3?! cxd4 (Δ16...Nc5/Ne5) and Black has compensation for the pawn.

13...c×d4 14 ♖×d6 ♞e5



15 ♖×e5

15 Nxe5 Qxd6 is hardly going to bring the crowd to their feet, but 15 Qxd4 appears convincing enough. However, 15...Nxf3+ 16 gf Re8?! (16...f5?! 17 Qc5 Qg5+ 18 Kh1 Qh5 19 Bxb8 Qxf3+ 20 Kg1 f4 21 Qg5 +-) 17 Rfd1 Rb7 18 Bxa6 +- or 16...Rb7 17 Bxa6 Rd7 18 Bxc8 Rxd6 19 Qxb4 Rd4 20 Qc5 f5∞, or even 15...Nxc4!? 16 Bxb8 Qxd4 17 Nxd4 f5! gives Black a very active game, although White should still win with 18 Ba7!

So here's another theme to bear in mind: never forget your opponent's feelings. It's a lot more depressing to be a pawn down for very little than a piece down for an illusory attack — we might call this hope.

15...f×e5 16 ♖×a6 ♖×a6 17 ♜×a6 ♜a8

After 17...b3, 18 Qd3 bxc2 19 Qxc2 d3! 20 Qd2 f5! is exceptionally viscous, and 18 cxb3 Rxb3 19 Rfb1 (ΔNd2+-) Qb8 20 Qe2 (20 Ra2 Bh6±) d3 21 Qd2 Rc8 22 a6 Rc2 23 a7 Qa8 24 Qe3 Bf8 25 Ra5 Rbxb2 26 Rxb2 Rxb2 27 g3 d2 28 Nxd2 Bb4 29 Rb5 Bxd2 30 Rxb2+- is far from compulsory, so maybe 18 Qd3 bxc2 19 Qxc2 d3! 20 Qc3 is best, answering 20...f5 with 21 Nd2±

18 ♜b5 ♜d6 19 ♖d2 ♜fb8 20 ♜d3 ♜c5 21 ♖c4 b3

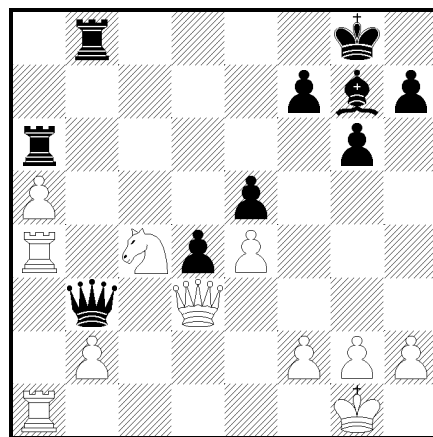
If White is allowed to play this move then he will be able to discover a path to victory at his leisure. An additional point to remember: keeping the appearance of control and understanding, even when it doesn't exist, can be immensely entertaining — I have lost many games this way with a smile on my face.

22 c×b3 ♜b5 23 ♜a4!

Planning 23...Qxb3 24 Qxb3 Rxb3 25 a6± 23...♜a6 24 ♜fa1

Δb4+-

24...♜×b3



25 ♖e5

Looks risky, as the bishop now slices across the board, but White just manages to hold the set together.

25...♜b5

25...Qxd3 26 Nxd3 Rb3 fails to 27 Nc5+-

26 ♜×b3

26 Qc4 Bxe5 27 Qc8+ Kg7 28 Qxa6 Qxb2 wins for White, but 26...Qxc4 transposes to a variation similar to the game.

26...♜×b3 27 ♖c4 d3 28 e5 ♖f8 29 g3 ♖c5 30 ♖f1 f6 31 ♖d2! ♜×b2 32 ♖e4 ♖a7 33 e×f6

33 Nxf6+ Rxf6 34 exf6 Rxf2+ 35 Ke1 Be3 36 R4a2 d2+ 37 Kd1 Rf1+ 38 Ke2 Rc1 39 Rxd2 Rxa1 offers Black some chances.

33...♜c6 34 ♜d1 ♜b3 35 a6 ♜c2 36 ♖g2

White brings his last piece into play and Black goes to the wall in style.

36...g5?!! 37 ♖h3 h6 38 ♖g4 ♖f7  
39 ♖h5 ♖e2 40 ♖×h6 g4 41 ♖g5 ♖e6  
42 ♖×g4

This falls into the category of suppressing the opponent's counterplay.

42...♖c2 43 h4 ♖c8 44 f7 ♖d8 45 ♖g5+  
♖d5 46 ♖e4

The rook which has held White's position for 20 moves now enters the battle.

46...♖f8 47 ♖e8 1-0

47...Bc5 48 Rxf8 Bxf8 49 a7 Ra3  
50 Rxd3+ would be enough, even without the 3 extra kingside pawns!

Doing a quick count up, the score has now reached 5-4 to Middlesex. The result on board seven soon levelled the match. Demis' opponent was making valient efforts to win an even position, eventually resulting in the loss of a pawn, and Demis perfunctorily cleaned up the queen and seven against queen and six ending.

Steve Foister had big problems out of the opening, but trapping his opponent's queen eased most of these. A misplayed ending left the position drawn. In time trouble, Eddie Holland's position crumbled whilst Jonny Parker's flag fell, although on reconstruction he had made sufficient moves. This was almost unfortunate, as he had one piece less than his opponent, but felt the need to play on. There were no such problems on top board, Jonathan Mestel winning for us again. Here's the game:

□ GM Jonathan Mestel

■ IM Colin Crouch

*Slav Defence*

1 c4 c6 2 ♖f3 d5 3 d4 ♖f6 4 ♖c3 d×c4  
5 a4 ♖f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♖×c4 ♖b4 8 O-O  
O-O 9 ♖e2 ♖bd7 10 e4 ♖g4 11 ♖d1  
♖h5 12 ♖a2 ♖e7 13 b4 a5 14 b5 ♖b6  
15 ♖b3 c×b5 16 ♖×b5 ♖g6 17 d5 e×d5  
18 ♖e3 ♖a6 19 e5 ♖g4 20 ♖d4 ♖h6

21 ♖c3 ♖f5 22 ♖×d5 ♖×d5 23 ♖×d5  
♖×d4 24 ♖×d4 ♖b6 25 ♖×b7 ♖×b5  
26 a×b5 ♖b6 27 ♖c6 ♖b4 28 ♖c1 ♖a3  
29 ♖cc4 h6 30 ♖f1 ♖f5 31 ♖e2 ♖e6  
32 ♖a4 ♖b2 33 ♖×a5 ♖×d4 34 ♖×d4  
♖d8 35 ♖×e6 f×e6 36 ♖a6 ♖bb8 37 b6  
g5 38 b7 ♖f7 39 ♖a8 ♖g6 40 ♖e3 ♖f5  
41 ♖×b8 ♖×b8 42 ♖d4 h5 43 ♖e4+ ♖f4  
44 g3+ ♖g4 45 ♖c5 ♖h3 46 ♖d6 1-0

On board 13, Nick Noden showed why he's been scoring so well for Cambs all year, slowly increasing his advantage in a materially unbalanced position. When he finally won, we were left needing half-a-point from Matt (or Jonny Parker still battling on a piece behind). Matt's game can only be described as 'interesting'. Here's what 'Chess' had to say about it:

*"Cambridge showed impressive resilience in the face of adversity, no more so than on board two. After blundering his queen for a rook, I naively expected Turner to resign, or at least to look a bit ashamed of himself! Instead, fixing his opponent with one of his famous stares, he played on as if nothing had happened, and after White drifted in a major way, it was Matthew who was calling the shots"*

In fairness to Matt, he didn't really blunder his queen for a rook. Instead, he first blundered a piece for two pawns and then later blundered his queen for rook and piece. But he wasn't phased and caused his opponent major problems by ramming his kingside pawns forwards. When the position finally reached king and queen vs king, rook, bishop and two pawns, Matt may even have had some winning chances, but a pawn was dropped and when his opponent offered a draw, he clinched the half-point we needed.

8-8 with a victory on board count is as close as they come. Now all we have to do is to retain the trophy...

## PWF Chess Filespace

For those of you who don't know, since the death of Phoenix the chess filespace has now been moved to the pwf.

To access it from the pc's type: *socmap chess* and then *i*:

On the Mac's you have to open the folder */ux/soc/chess*

In the chess filespace you'll find up-to-date league and cuppers results, league rules, AGM minutes, CUCC constitution, etc etc, and, subject to the efficiency of the appropriate committee member, lists of forthcoming chess tournaments and CUCC matches and social events.



# To Know The Future You Must First Know The Past

by Philip Best

Most chess players, at one point or another, have paused for a moment mid-game to ask themselves the question “How on earth did we ever get into this position?” This is, of course, a rhetorical question, but it is surprising how much information can be gleaned about a game even if you haven’t seen a single move.

This article is inspired by two books by Raymond Smullyan, the undisputed master of retrograde analysis. Each book sets out fifty chess problems of the highest quality, guaranteed to be of interest to anyone who knows how the pieces move. But they are no ordinary puzzles. The aim is not to discover what will happen if the game is continued (eg White to move and mate in three), but instead what *must already have happened* to reach the position shown.

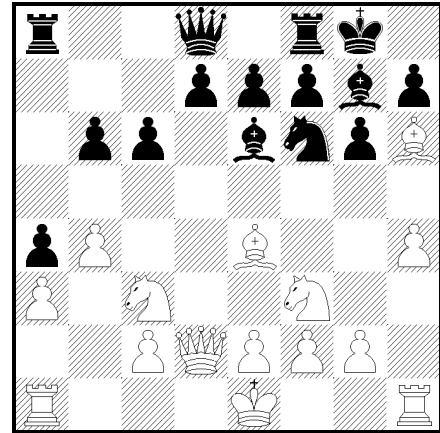
His first book, entitled ‘*Chess mysteries of Sherlock Holmes*’ sets out the problems in true Conan-Doyle style. Written from the point of view of Dr. Watson, Holmes comes across a wide variety of problems, generally involving him turning up in the middle of a game to make some astonishing deduction which he then explains (ably interrupted by Watson and others, to make sure the solution is crystal clear). The second book in the series is ‘*Chess Mysteries of the Arabian Knights*’, in which the major pieces are given characters and the problems are written from the point of view of Haroun, the White King. Each problem is given its own story by way of introduction, and again the answers are well explained in words rather than chess notation. I would recommend these books to anyone.

The retrograde problemist has many tools that they can work with, and in the first few problems (composed by me), I hope to demonstrate these, so that you can use your gained knowledge to tackle the last two problems, which are taken from *Arabian Knights* and are the best retrograde analysis problems I’ve seen. Please have a go at the problems first before you read the solutions.

The most important tool for the problem setter is the pawn – to move away from their initial files they must make captures, and this can put great restrictions on where various pieces were captured. Under-promotion and en-passant are also frequently used.

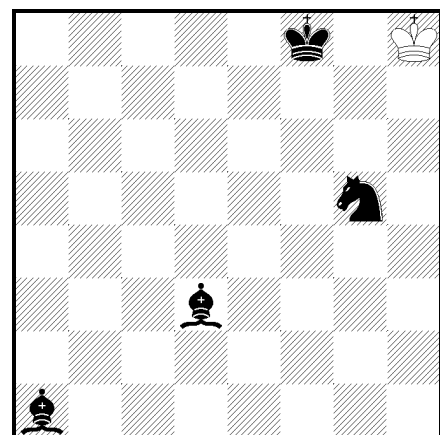
We start with a couple of simple problems:

(1) On which square was the missing Black knight captured?



If we count up the pieces on the board, each side has fifteen. White is missing his d-pawn, whilst Black is missing the knight we wish to trace. The first question we must ask is ‘How did the ♔e4 get there?’. Clearly neither the e2 nor g2 pawn has ever moved, so the bishop could never escape from f1. The only possibility is that the original king’s bishop was captured on f1, and the one currently on e4 must have been promoted from the d-pawn. Looking at Black’s pawn structure, that would only be possible if the pawn went up to d6, then captured on c7 and promoted on c8. Therefore the missing Black knight was captured on c7.

(2) What were the last three moves (halfply) given that none of them were captures?



The most striking thing about this position is that the White king is in check (in fact check-mate) from the dark-squared bishop. How did Black deliver this check? Clearly not by moving the bishop. Also not as a discovered check from the knight since there is no square the knight could have come from.

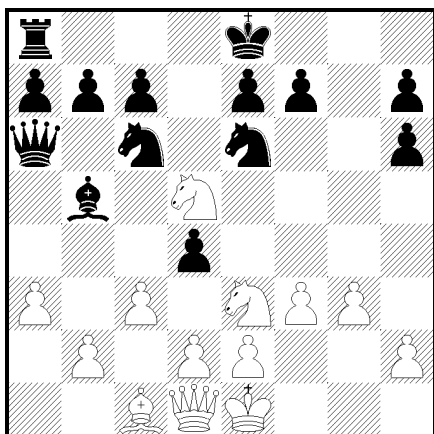
Therefore the only possibility is that Black just promoted a pawn to a bishop on a1. Then what was White's previous move? It must have been with the king from h7 to h8. On h7 it was simultaneously in check from the light-squared bishop and the knight. This is only possible if Black's previous move had been with the knight, moving from e4 to g5, simultaneously delivering and discovering check. Therefore three moves previously, the White king was on h7, and Black had Pa2, ♘d3, ♖e4 and ♔f8. Play continued 1...♖g5+ 2 ♔h8 a1(♘)#.

(NB: Without the 'no captures' statement, Black's last move could have been bxa1(B), and White's previous move with the captured piece.)

These problems serve to demonstrate the point made by Holmes to Watson in similar situations: "When you've eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbably, must be the truth".

Now for a rather more tricky problem:

(3) Can Black castle?



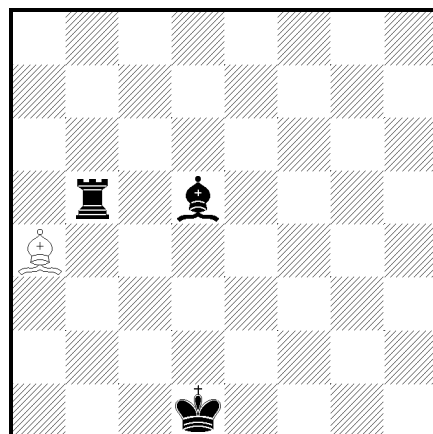
Well, if he can castle then he has moved neither king nor rook. If we count the number of pieces on the board, White has 13 (missing both rooks and his light-squared bishop) and Black has 14 (missing one rook and his dark-squared bishop).

The first apparent thing about the position is that the Black pawn on h6 must have made a capture. What did it capture? It couldn't have been the bishop because the capture was made on a dark-square. Neither could it have been the queen's rook which could never have got out into the game since the ♘c1 has not been able to move. Hence it must have captured the king's rook. How did this get out into the game, given the White pawn structure? The only possibility is that the pawns on f3 and g3 must have cross-captured, so that at some point either the f- or g-file was open for the rook to pass through.

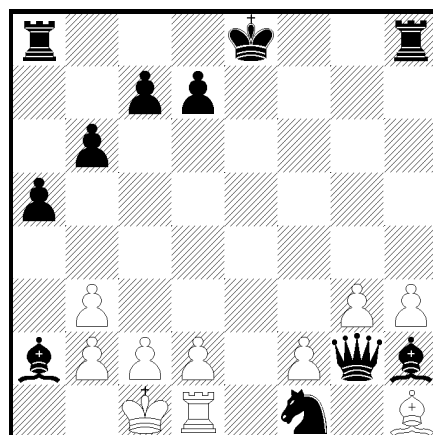
These two captures must have been of the missing Black rook and bishop. At least one of these captures must have taken place *before* the capture on h6, to let the White rook out. But before the capture on h6, the pawn was still on g7, trapping the Black bishop on f8 and hence also trapping the king's rook. Therefore the only possibility is that the first capture was the rook originally from a8, and the rook currently on a8 began the game on h8. The sequence of events must have been as follows: the rook from a8 gets captured on f3; this releases the White king's rook, which gets captured on h6; this releases Black's king's bishop and rook; the bishop gets captured on g3 and the rook moves round to a8. Therefore Black can't castle.

Now here's a couple of problems for you to tackle on your own. You'll find the answers with explanation at the end of my other article in this issue. Good luck!

(4) The White king has been knocked off the board. On which square should it be replaced?



(5) Given that it is Black to move, identify the invisible piece/pawn on g4? Also, can Black castle?



## An explanation of the Past

Now for the solutions I promised to the retrograde analysis problems. These are (hopefully) set out in such a way that if you got stuck, you can read the first bit to get a hint, and then go back to the problem and keep trying. Anyway, here goes:

(4) It's tempting to argue (fallaciously) that the position is impossible wherever the White King stands. It is apparent that unless the king stands on b3, Black is in check. The White king cannot stand on b3, because it would be in double check from the Black bishop and rook and this would have been impossible to deliver. So, Black is in check from the ♔a4. How did White deliver this check? Clearly not by moving the bishop, so it must have been a revealed check by moving the king from b3 last move (and the king is now on a3 or c3). But if it was on b3, then previously it would have been in the double check which was impossible to deliver!

So, where is the flaw in this argument? Well, instead of the White king simply moving from b3, could it not have made a capture as well? How does this help? Well, the piece or pawn must have moved to c3 or a3, and in doing so revealed check from both the bishop and the rook. Is this possible? Yes! The only possibility is that the pawn came to c3 from b4, capturing a White pawn en-passant. Thus, three half-ply previously White had ♔a4, ♕b3, and Pc2 whilst Black had ♖b5, ♗d5, Pb4 and ♔d1, and play continued: **1 c4 bxc4+ 2 ♕xc3+**. Hence the White king now stands on c3.

(5) The first question to ask is how the ♔a2 got there? Clearly it cannot be original, or else it could never have got passed the Pb3. Therefore it must be promoted. The promoting pawn must have started the game on e7, and hence have made four captures to get to the a-file, plus a further capture on b1. Also, the White queen's bishop can never

have left c1, so must have been captured there. This accounts for all six missing White pieces, so the piece/pawn on g4 must be Black.

Since we are given that it is Black's move, White must have moved last. There is only one legal last move, that being castling queenside, so the king must never have moved from e1 before. How then did the king's rook get out to be captured by the e-pawn? Clearly the g- and h-pawns must have cross-captured. Now, given that the Pg3 came from h2, how did the ♔h2 ever get in there? The only answer is that it must also be promoted! The pawn must have promoted on g1 and hence originally have been the g7 pawn (since we have accounted for captures of all the White bits). The order of events was that the g2 pawn captured on h3, then the White rook got out, then the Black g-pawn promoted, and then there was a capture on g3.

Now, since the f-file and h-file have permanently been blocked by a pawn, no further Black promotions can have taken place. Therefore the piece/pawn on g4 cannot be a rook or a queen. It also cannot be a bishop (or castling would have been illegal), nor a pawn (which couldn't capture onto the g-file), so it must be a Black knight!

Now, can Black castle? Well, Black is missing four pieces (two bishops and the pawns from f7 and h7). Three of these were captured on b3, g3 and h3. None of these can have been the f7 pawn which never left its own file. Also, if you remember, the e7 pawn made five captures on its way to promotion, and one of these must have either been the White e2 pawn, or its promoted form. Since there is nothing for the e2 pawn to have captured to get over to the d-file, it must have promoted. This might either have been on e8, or on f8 having captured the Black f-pawn (in which case it must have passed through f7). Either way, the Black king must have moved so Black can't castle.